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SECURITY INFORMATION

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D. C.

August 29, 1958

Honorable Dwight D. Eisenhower

The White House

Dear Mr. President:

Allen Dulles, Director of CIA, briefed me in his office in late July re the current position of the Soviet in the long-range missile field, intermediate range ballistic missiles and inter-continental ballistic missiles.

I subsequently received information that would appear to show that Mr. Dulles heavily underrated Soviet missile development to date, as well as planned capabilities.

Upon receiving this information I analyzed our own missile programs and thereupon became convinced the latter are inadequate to meet the growing danger.

This conclusion would seem obvious if our planning has been based on incorrect information - and that is why I am presenting this paper to you.

More specifically, if the information contained is correct, we believe the planning incident to our weapons system, primarily missiles, beginning now and lasting at least into 1964, is so insufficient in this area as to leave ourselves and our allies subject to overt political, if not actual military aggression from the Sino-Soviet alliance - with a relatively slight chance of effective retaliation against such aggression between 1960 and 1962.

On August 6, therefore, I again saw Mr. Dulles with Mr. Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr. We pointed out to Mr. Dulles in some detail our reasons for believing that his estimates were inaccurate.

In each case where there was disagreement, the figures presented to Mr. Dulles were much greater as to Soviet accomplishment than the figures he had presented me a few days previously.

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When Mr. Dulles inquired where we had obtained our information, we replied: "From your own and other elements of the national intelligence system."

Two days later, August 8, when Mr. Dulles briefed the Senate Subcommittee to which the CIA reports, the figures he gave that committee were the same as the figures he had originally given me.

The estimates he presented the Senate on August 8th are as follows:

The Soviets have fired many missiles up to 700 miles in range; also many up to 1,000 miles. The total firings in these two categories are estimated to be some 300.

So far the Soviets have accomplished 12 test firings of 1100 miles, and are considered to be operational with this missile this year.

The Soviets are known to have established a new 3500 nautical mile test range.

In the ICBM field, Russia is concentrating on a 5500 mile missile, with a warhead which may weigh 5,000 pounds.

Six ICBM missiles have been launched to date, of which four are known to have landed in the impact area.

It is estimated the USSR will have an operational quantity of ten of these 5500 mile missiles some time during 1959. They may have this capability some time in 1958.

From 2 to 3 years after the Soviets acquire these first ten, they will have 500 operational ICBM's.

The picture of the Soviet test program, as indicated by Mr. Dulles, finds the Soviet progressing from the basis of 12 IRBM test firings and 6 ICBM test firings to date, to 500 operational ICBM's two to three years from now.

The above presentation in itself is immediate ground for concern that Mr. Dulles' figures are too low, because the short lead time from this brief test schedule to 500 operational missiles two to three years from now is incompatible with the program planned for our own ICBM, the Atlas.

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As example, the Atlas will have test fired approximately 100 missiles by the time some 64 Atlases are operational in 1961 - three and a half years from now.

Mr. Dulles gave no indication of the number and location of medium and long-range missile bases the Soviets now have, or may be building.

Nor did he give any indication of the number and status of ballistic missile test ranges being used by the Soviets, as compared with our one range. This latter information is vital to any understanding of the true nature of the threat.

As to our own ballistic missile program, I am told we have successfully launched 29 Redstone type missiles of ranges 100-200 miles; 8 Thor type missiles of ranges from 1250 to 2,000 miles; and 5 Jupiter type missiles of ranges of 1500 to 1600 miles.



I am also told we have launched 3 Jupiter test systems (as compared with weapons systems) of ranges from 1200 - 3300 miles; and that, as of early this month, we launched our first relatively complete ICBM, an Atlas, over a range of 2600 miles.

I further understand that our planned ballistic missile schedules call for 10 IRBM bases and 150 operational IRBM missiles to be in position by the end of 1960; and also that we plan to have, by 1962, 12 bases and 180 missiles.

In the ICBM field I understand that in 1960 we will have 2 groups of launching sites, one in Wyoming and one in Nebraska, with a maximum capability of launching 24 ICBM's in twenty-five minutes. (This excludes the training base in Southern California which may be established prior to this time, because the base itself is beyond the operational range from which the Atlas could reach a majority of the Soviet targets; and because the Atlas missile will not yet be reliably capable of less than 1/2 hour reaction time before 1960.)

By 1962 I understand we plan to have 13 groups of launching sites, with a maximum capability of launching 120 - 130 ICBM's in twenty-five minutes.

There are no known plans beyond this number of bases and missiles for the Atlas or Titan; nor are there any such plans for contemplated ICBM weapons systems like the solid-propelled ICBM Minute Man.

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As to the Polaris systems, my understanding is that none of these systems would be operational until 1960 at the earliest; and that date appears over-optimistic to us.

There follow the figures given us by Mr. Dulles as to the Russian position:

<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>
6 launchings, 4 impacts in 1957 to date, ranges 3500 mi. or more.					



Maybe 10 operation- al @ 5500 mi. in this year.	- - - - -	500 operational	Additional number, estimated to be oper- ational, not given.
10 oper- ational	- - - - -	500 oper- ational	

As presented, we believe the above CIA estimate vastly understates Soviet testing to date. Even so, however, it predicts a greatly superior operational Soviet ICBM force, from 1960 through 1962, as compared with the actual program of the United States.

This latter program follows:

<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>
3 @ 600-800 miles. 2 @ 2600 mi. 10 more Atlas and 1 Titan test this year		Approx. 100 test flights of Atlas & Titan sched- uled for '59-'60 period. None fully operational.	24 Atlas oper- ational capability. Polaris possibly operational.	65 oper- ational Atlas, plus some Titans and Polaris	120-130 oper- ational Atlas & Titan & Polaris

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As to Soviet testing to date, we believe the more valid figures are as follows:

RUSSIA

1957

1958

Source #1

Approximately 60 test firings over ranges 3500 miles or more.

Approximately 20 test firings this year over ranges of 3500 miles or more.

[Also 2 thermo-nuclear test firings accomplished as part of ICBM or IRBM test flights.]



Source #2

Approximately 45 firings over ranges of 3500 miles or more.

Approximately 10 test firings this year, over ranges of 3500 miles or more.

[Launching sites being established in Murmansk and Kamchatka area.]

The reason the number of ICBM firings, as reported by both the above sources, is so much less to date in 1958 as against 1957, is because of the long time lag incident to developing the final integrated analysis of the raw data.

This time lag may in itself furnish part of the clue to the difference between the Dulles estimates and the larger estimates we believe to be more accurate.

In analyzing raw data from either source, there may be gradations of opinion as to the meaning of the data. We would assume that these gradations of analytical opinion have been assessed at the policy level of the intelligence system. We would also assume one source of information has been integrated with the other.

If both these steps have been taken in the assessment of the information indicated from Sources 1 and 2, however, it is very hard to understand how the final conclusion as to the rate of ICBM test activity of the Soviets could be many times less than the raw data would indicate.

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SUMMARY

The United States plans to have 24 operational ICBM's by 1960; and 120-130 by 1962.

In the same time period the CIA estimates the Soviets will have 500 ICBM's by 1960 or 1961.

Based on these accepted figures alone, we believe our currently planned defense programs are insufficient to meet the threat which the CIA estimates the Soviets will pose by 1961.

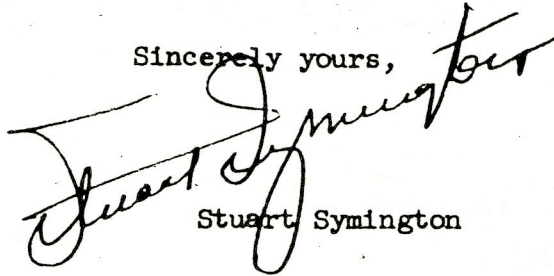
But if we are correct in our belief that the Soviet ballistic missile testing program has been much greater than as estimated by the CIA, and if construction of Russian ICBM launching sites is as advanced and as wide-spread as we understand to be the case, it is clear that our planned defense programs are even more insufficient.

May we respectfully present the fact that you have said many times we should not underestimate a possible enemy.

Based on the information outlined, however, we believe our national intelligence system is underestimating the enemy's current and future ballistic missile capability.

As a result, we also believe that our national defense plans and programs are not being effectively related to sound estimates of Soviet capability.

Sincerely yours,


Stuart Symington

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